United Nations

Press Release

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FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- IAEA Board of Governors condemns Iraq for non-compliance with safeguards agreement; first time a State party to the Nuclear Weapons Non-Proliferation Treaty has been condemned by the Agency.

- Office of Sadruddin Aga Khan reports clashes between Kurds and Iraqi military in northern Iraq; 50 to 500 casualties reported.

- Kuwait informs Security Council of nearly 4,000 prisoners of war and detainees still in Iraq.

- Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar meets with various Presidents at Iberoamerican Summit in Mexico.

- Brazilian soccer star Pele appointed Goodwill Ambassador to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

- Expert Working Group to hold hearings next week in London on human rights situation in southern Africa.

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The Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has condemned Iraq for non-compliance with the Agency's safeguards agreement.

This is the first time that a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) has been condemned for concealing its nuclear programme.

According to a press release issued at United Nations Headquarters yesterday, the Board declared that Iraq had violated its safeguards agreement with IAEA by "not submitting nuclear material and relevant facilities in its uranium enrichment programme to the Agency's inspection".

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For information media—not an official record

Speaking at the Board meeting, IAEA Director-General Hans Blix said major changes were needed to strengthen the safeguards system, and that the case of Iraq demonstrated the "challenges that may need to be met and the ability of the Agency to meet them".

The IAEA Board will transmit its conclusion to the Security Council in accordance with the Agency's statute.

According to a United Nations spokesman, a new inspection team will travel to Iraq next week to replace the current team, which leaves Iraq tomorrow, 20 July.

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According to the office of the Executive Delegate for Humanitarian Affairs in the Gulf, Sadruddin Aga Khan, fighting has broken out between the Iraqi army and the Kurds in northern Iraq.

United Nations spokesman Fred Eckhard told correspondents today that United Nations guards currently deployed in Sulaymaniyah, Iraq, had reported yesterday that clashes had taken place between Kurds and the Iraqi military in that town, as well as in the town of Arbil. Estimated casualties ranged from about 50 to 500, he said, and the United Nations was awaiting clarification from sources in Geneva or Iraq as to the exact numbers.

The Executive Delegate was in touch with Iraqi authorities and also with Kurdish leaders to urge restraint on both sides, the spokesman said, and positive responses had been received from both sides in the conflict. He added that there are 100 United Nations personnel in the area, 87 of whom are security guards.

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Kuwait has informed the Security Council that Iraq has yet to release nearly 4,000 prisoners of war and detainees following the Gulf war.

In a letter to the President of the Council, the Permanent Representative of Kuwait, Mohammad A. Abdulhasan, said Iraq was not abiding by the terms of various Security Council resolutions, which called for the immediate release of prisoners of war under the auspices of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC).

The Ambassador further charged that Iraq had recently moved some prisoners of war and detainees to undisclosed locations, and that ICRC had been denied information of, let alone access to, these new locations. Since the cease-fire, he said, only 68 prisoners of war had been repatriated.

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Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar is in Guadalajara, Mexico, for the second day of the Iberoamerican Summit. This morning, he attended aworking breakfast hosted by President Carlos Salinas of Mexico. The other participants included President Carlos Andres Perez of Venezuela, President Cesar Gaviria of Colombia and Prime Minister Felipe Gonzalez of Spain. These are the Heads of State and Government of the countries known as "Friends of the Secretary-General" in connection with the ongoing peace efforts in El Salvador.

A United Nations spokesman confirmed today that the Secretary-General had met yesterday with a delegation of the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberacion Nacional (FMLN) to discuss the ongoing peace talks. He also met separately with Salvadorean President Alfredo Cristiani.

Today, the Secretary-General participated in the working sessions of the Summit, devoted to economic and social development issues as well as international law.

The Summit will conclude this evening with a formal declaration, to be known as the Guadalajara Declaration. The Secretary-General will return to New York tomorrow, 20 July.

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Edson Arantes do Nascimento, better known as Pele, the name under which he became famous throughout the world as a star soccer player from Brazil, today was named Goodwill Ambassador for the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

At a press conference at United Nations Headquarters today, Pele said the position was something new for him. He said people had to give something to succeeding generations, and that this was the moment to try to do something to save the Earth.

Maurice Strong, Secretary-General of the 1992 Conference, said world leaders were in increasing numbers committing themselves to attend the Earth Summit. The whole purpose of a United Nations conference of this kind, he said, was "to provide special political focus and energy on issues that were not moving adequately in the normal course".

The Earth Summit, which will be convened in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, next June, is expected to be the largest United Nations Conference ever, and is the first to be convened at the level of Head of State or Government.

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The Ad Hoc Working Group of Experts on Southern Africa will conduct a week of hearings in London beginning next Monday. The Group was established in 1967 by the Commission on Human Rights.

The Working Group, which has expressed particular interest in gathering first-hand information on the human rights situation in South Africa, will focus attention on developments which have occurred since January. It will hear testimony from persons with first-hand knowledge of the human rights situation in South Africa, particularly conditions after the repeal of certain apartheid legislation and the situation in the so-called "homelands".

The information received during these hearings will be taken into account by the Working Group in preparing its reports to the General Assembly and the Human Rights Commission.

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